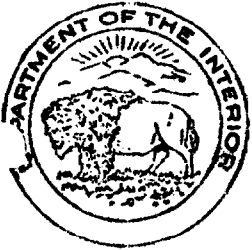


Office Memorandum 9-18-51



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1951

ANNUAL CENSUS OF RARE TRUMPETER SWANS REVEALS A NEW HIGH IN POPULATION

The rare trumpeter swan, which was disappearing from this country in the early 1930's, supplied the highest count in 17 years during the annual census taken July 31-August 3.

The trumpeter swan population figures released today by the Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, give a new high of 535 birds—an increase of 159 adult and young swans, or cygnets, over last year, according to Director Albert M. Day.

This unusually large number, which is 462 more swans than the 1935 count of 73, is believed to be due to better breeding conditions. Last year's count was 376 trumpeters.

The yearly trumpeter census is taken by personnel of the National Park Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service.

On the Red Rock Lakes Refuge in Montana, 374 trumpeters were counted. Of this number, 89 were cygnets. There was a net gain of 140 birds over last year's total of 234.

Idaho gained 26 trumpeter swans, including 11 young birds, while Yellowstone National Park and the National Elk Refuge nearby, yielded the same number as last year, 80 swans.

The total increase of young swans in all areas amounted to 45.

Not only is the trumpeter swan one of the rarest and largest of North America's wild fowl—its wing spread is 8 feet or more—it is also the most outstanding example of a species saved from United States extinction through the establishment of a Federal refuge staffed with wildlife management experts.

At one time, the beautiful trumpeter ranged over the West and Midwest: California and British Columbia to Manitoba, Minnesota, Iowa, and Missouri. When the areas the swan preferred as a habitat were overrun by encroaching civilization, the great bird started to decline rapidly.

When extinction threatened it, conservationists, launched a campaign for a Federal sanctuary where the bird would find safety. In 1935, the Red Rock Lakes Refuge near Yellowstone National Park was established.

When increasing numbers of the trumpeter began to endanger the limited breeding range, some of them were transplanted, in 1947, to the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, Oregon, and Ruby Lake Refuge in eastern Nevada. A few birds were transplanted to the National Elk Refuge, just south of Yellowstone.

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